

SUPPORTING ARMED FORCES IN ACUTE HOSPITAL SETTINGS E – BULLETIN



MAY 2023

UNIVERSITY OF CHESTER PROJECT EVALUATOR

Update from Professor Alan Finnegan

Welcome to the fourth E-Bulletin for the Evaluation of the Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings Programme. We are now firmly into the final year of data collection and have made significant progress in our interviews. In the summer, we will also be looking to conduct focus groups, to help to strengthen the findings from the interviews and to facilitate discussion surrounding the role. It is now also pivotal that we begin to receive case studies from the grant holders in each NHS Trust as these are key in providing examples of the impact that the AFA (or equivalent) has had on the veteran community in the hospital.

It remains as important as ever that we receive data from the NHS Trusts. We have seen an increase in the number of grant holders who are inputting onto the portal recently, and this is helping to provide a veteran profile of those who the AFA is engaging with. The feedback from veterans and family members, as well as the staff training surveys, also remain vital to help to further understand the impact of this role and we ask for this to continue.

Interviews have, so far, been conducted successfully, with themes already emerging in regard to impact, challenges and future recommendations for the sustainability of this role. If you have not yet arranged an interview, please do ensure that you are working to find a date in the diary to do so.

The roadshow held on the 4th of April 2023, was undoubtedly a success, with many AFA's travelling far and feeding indicating that attendees found the presentations and discussions beneficial. Sustainability was a key theme of this roadshow, with many AFA's looking to make a case to keep this role within their NNS Trusts.

Northern Ireland continues to receive phone calls, and identify the gaps in their reach, ensuring that presentations are given throughout the region, in numerous different organisations, on what the advice line can offer. I will be visiting Belfast soon to conduct interviews and look forward to seeing more of this work.

EDUCATIONAL MODULE

The Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans educational module has been adapted into a Moodle Module which you can access [here](#). Originally created for student nurses, but has been found to be incredibly useful to numerous healthcare staff and professions.

Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans
Mental health and Veterans

University of Chester

Welcome to the online training module for *Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings*

This Moodle Module has been created for the Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings programme funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and NHS England and is using the free online educational module "Introduction to the Armed Forces Community" which was created by the Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans at the University of Chester.

This programme is encapsulated into 6 chapters to educate healthcare practitioners to deliver optimum care to military veterans and their families through an understanding and insight into the Armed Forces Community.

The creation of the original online sessions were supported by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust, Health Education England and the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust. Background to the project and the evaluation were published in Finnegan, AP., et al (2020). Educating Nurses to Deliver Optimum Care to Military Veterans and their Families. *Nurse Education in Practice*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nepr.2019.102654>

The original educational module can be accessed [here](#) and is also available on the NHS Learning Hub which can be accessed [here](#)

The purpose of this training is to help you to feel empowered to connect with veterans, discuss experiences and offer appropriate support to them, and to each other, to provide the best possible care.

Pre course knowledge assessment

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Armed Forces Community

Chapter 2 The British Armed Forces and Veterans

Chapter 3 Military Nursing

Chapter 4 Military Mental Health

Chapter 5 Caring for and supporting the Armed Forces Community

Chapter 6 Caring for and Supporting the Armed Forces Community: ...

Post course knowledge assessment

Completion Certificate

This module consists of videos which are designed to be able to be viewed at leisure. We have also included a pre and post quiz which tests knowledge before and after using the module. These quizzes are completely optional for staff. If the staff would like a completion certificate they must complete all chapters and quizzes.

Chapter 1 Introduction to the Armed Forces Community

Welcome to Chapter 1.

This chapter gives an overview of all that is contained in this online module and introduces you to the what the Armed Forces Community means.

Approx 8 minutes.

Please check the tick box once you have watched the video



THE EVALUATION

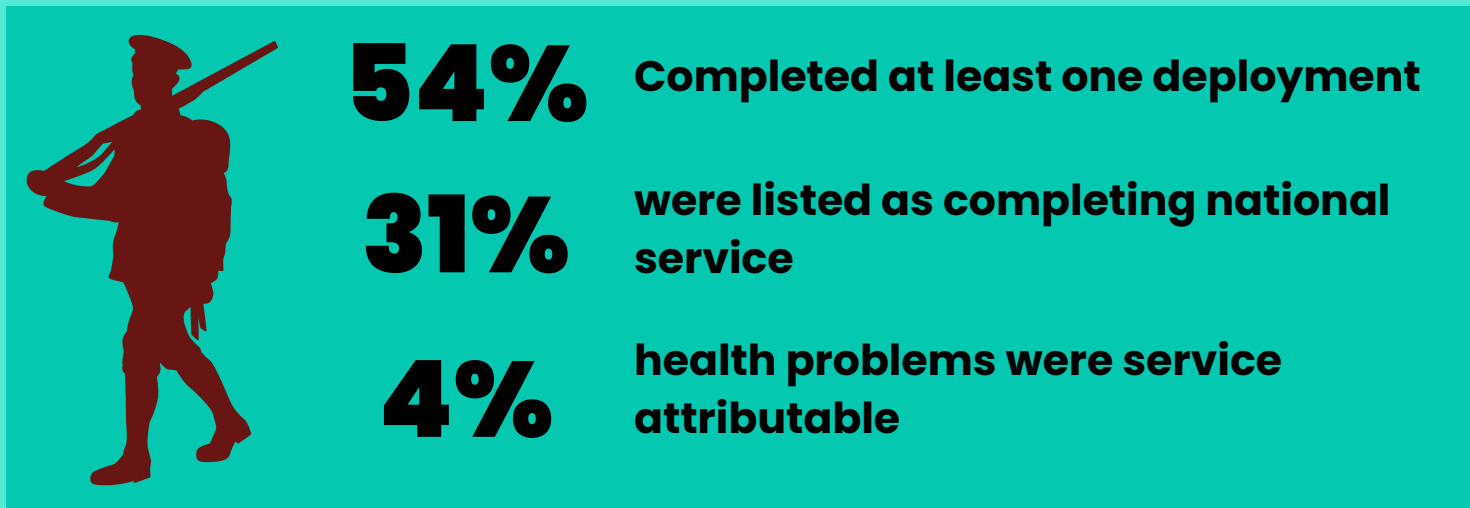
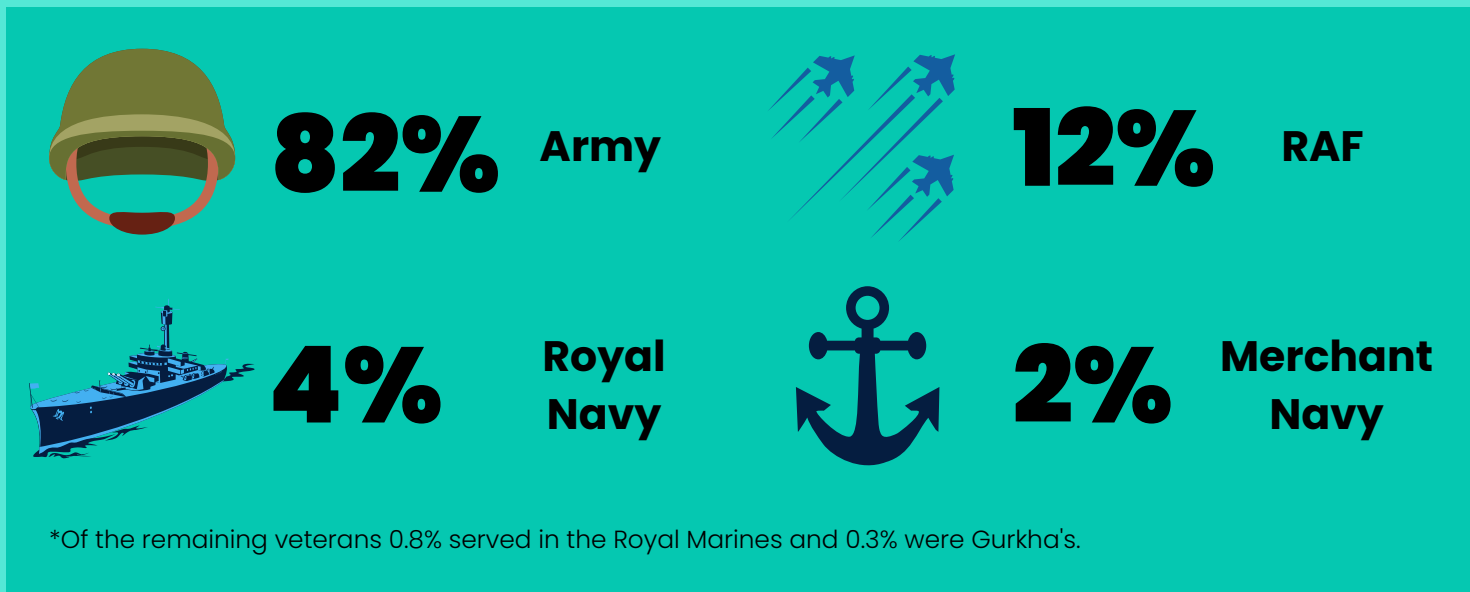
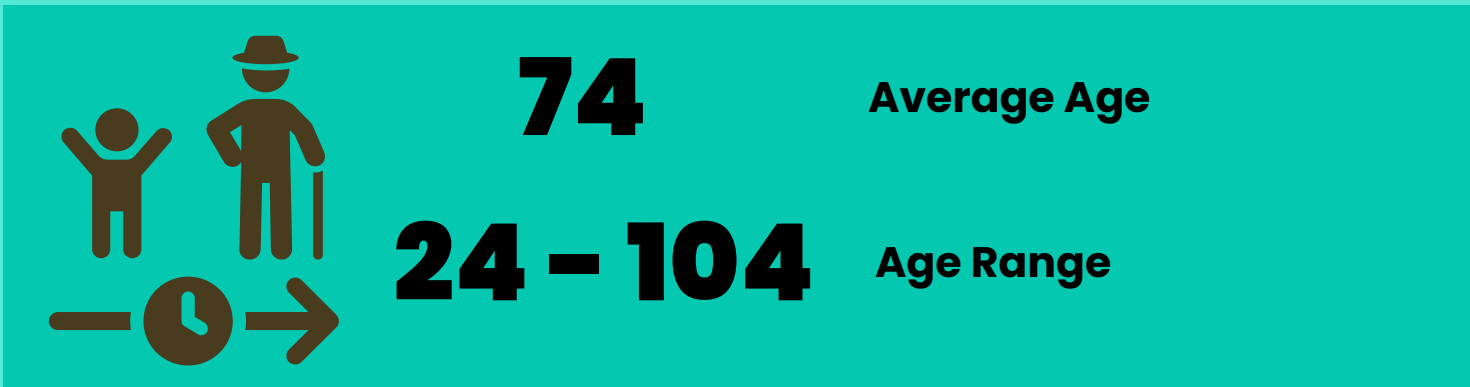
Data is received on a weekly basis in an anonymised format. Below is the data that has been received and analysed by the project team as of the 22nd of March 2023. Data past this point has been recieved but is yet to be analysed.

Type	N	Change Since 24/01/2023
Portal Entries	850	+ 347
Service User Feedback Surveys	55	+ 15
Family Member Feedback Surveys	18	+ 3
Staff Pre Training Surveys	463	+ 111
Staff Post Training Surveys	454	+ 128
Moodle Module Engagements	12	+ 1
Northern Ireland Advice Line Calls	333	+ 112
Northern Ireland Feedback Surveys	14	+ 1

Thank you to those who have been inputting data, ensuring that surveys are completed and in the case of Northern Ireland, sending regular data. Without data, we are unable to complete the evaluation. Therefore, it is vital that this data is completed.

VETERAN DEMOGRAPHICS

We now have 850 veterans inputted into the Armed Forces Advocate Portal which have been analysed. A summary of the demographics of these veterans can be seen below.



REFERRALS

The portal also records where the AFA's are referring veterans to for support. Below is a snapshot of some of the services that veterans are being referred to.



STAFF TRAINING



52%

of those trained were Nurses

61%

were band 5 or below



Before Training

58%

selected "Strongly Disagree/Disagree" for having an awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant

After Training

91%

selected "Strongly Agree/Agree" for having an awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant



Before Training

53%

graded their knowledge as "Very Poor/Poor" on the Armed Forces Community

After Training

74%

graded their knowledge as "Very Good/Good" on the Armed Forces Community

Before Training



51%

selected "Strongly Disagree/Disagree" for knowing what services are available to veterans

After Training

90%

selected "Strongly Agree/Agree" for knowing what services are available to veterans

Trainees have the option to leave comments regarding the experience of their training. The feedback received has been positive about the AFA.

"Really helpful and ideas that can implement into the service to improve teams awareness and knowledge of the AFC and how we can help their service use."

"Brilliant presentation, much more gained than anticipated."

"I found the speaker very informative and approachable. I knew nothing about signposting veterans and the support they can receive."

"It was really good training session, very helpful and useful. Thank you!"

"The training was excellent and [the AFA] made it enjoyable as well as informative. [The AFA] answered lots of questions from the class and I can not praise [the AFA] enough."

SERVICE USER FEEDBACK

Service Users are also given the opportunity for feedback as well as their family members. Currently, we have 55 SU feedback surveys and 18 from Family members. Fifty Six Percent of SU's stated that they had received additional support, and 72.2% of family members stated additional support had been put in place for the SU.

The feedback received is positive with 97.3% of feedback surveys rating the AFA's overall support as either good or very good, the rest rated the support as average. Comments left on the surveys indicated that SU's and Family members liked that there was someone available who understood and were able to talk to about the military. Some improvements suggested simply included more visits from the AFA.

NORTHERN IRELAND (NI)

Northern Ireland's evaluation is bespoke to them due to differences in legislation. Instead, NI has created an advice line that both organisations and veterans are able to call.



333

calls have been made to the advice line since launching*

48%

of the calls came from organisations

REASONS FOR USING ADVICE LINE



26%

Mental Health



28%

General Advice



20%

Physical Health



13%

Pensions



12%

Housing

SIGNPOSTING



make the call

0800 232 1271*

text 'CHECK' to 67300

nidirect.gov.uk/makethecall

Northern Ireland only

*network charges may apply



Users of the advice line are asked to complete a feedback survey. Currently, there has been 14 surveys completed all of which are positive. One Hundred percent of those who completed the survey rated the advice line as either good or very good. In addition, 100% also rated the advice line as either useful or very useful and were either likely or very likely to use the advice line again.

"Someone cares."

"Very polite and helpful."

"Willingness and friendly approach to help provide the best solutions for the individual needs."

"Help with form filling, a god send."

"Got help required with home heating."

Users also have the opportunity to express what was positive about the advice line and any improvements that could be made. One improvement suggested to include the council Veterans champion in signposting. Some of the positive comments can be seen here.

ARMED FORCES COVENANT FUND TRUST

Update from The Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT)

The Trust would like to thank advocates for attending our first roadshow for the 'Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings' programme'.

We spoke on the benefits this programme is providing for the Armed Forces Veteran within acute hospital settings as well as the potential cost savings and working in collaboration with partners such as local authorities and charities to develop a governance structure to support all.

Amongst the wonderful speakers were two of the England funded projects from James Paget University Hospitals and East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust. They provided an insight of the great work that has been taking place. Sadiq Shafiq from East Lancashire led on the impact and funding of the project, the long-term plan and what factors need to be considered in preparation of a future business case. Chris Blyth from James Paget focused on how the Trusts can maintain and embed the project by establishing a process that becomes day to day practice. The importance of staff awareness, engagement, and visibility to help the project succeed and the effectiveness of sharing positive outcomes.

Our NHS sponsor, senior programme lead Professor Andy Bacon spoke on 'Where next for the advocates?' elaborating on how we get holistic support for the whole Armed Forces community and which model from the pilot is the most effective to get best value for money and deliver maximum integration and efficiency whilst touching on branching outside of the pilot scheme on how we could incorporate the work into other parts of the NHS including primary care networks and community health services.

Lt Col (Ret'd) Guy Benson, National VCHA team leader, spoke on the collaboration of organisations coming together to build a stronger network of veteran support to implement these changes and to highlight the Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance and to pay tribute to the advocates and their inspiring journey so far. Lt Col Guy Benson wanted to reinforce some of the benefits these projects have to the healthcare provider, the benefits to the individual and thinking about the next steps, where we go from here.

Professor Alan Finnegan and Dr Rebecca Randles from the University of Chester provide the evaluation mechanism for the 'Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings' programme and gave an evaluation update on what they are measuring and why feedback and data collection is key to be able to demonstrate the real impact the advocates are having to the Armed Forces community and the importance of data collection, that you cannot prove the need without data to help to sustain the projects going forward.

We had an overwhelming response to the event with advocates expressing how much the content and information provided was incredibly useful and how they can implement the ideas in their own settings from the inspiring conversations and presentations on the day from other advocates.

With this in mind, we are now in the foundation stages of organising our next event. We will update you further in due course when we have more details on this.

Our programme lead Rachael Storr and project coordinator Gemma Calvert are contacting all the advocates individually in due course to set up a ten-minute surgery. This will give Rachael scope to meet the advocates and to hear about how the projects are progressing. This will also open a window of opportunity for the advocates to ask any questions they may have.

Programme lead

Rachael.storr@covenantfund.org.uk

Project coordinator

gemma.calvert@covenantfund.org.uk



NHS ENGLAND

Update from NHS England (NHSE)

On 1 April 2023, the revised service model for Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service went live and Op NOVA: Supporting Veterans in the Justice System launched. This is an exciting time for the NHS England Armed Forces healthcare commissioning team and represents the culmination of significant engagement, procurement, mobilisation and coproduction activity within our Armed Forces team.

Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service

Op COURAGE is now delivered under a single service specification, formally having been commissioned as three individual services:

- Veterans' Mental Health Transition, Intervention and Liaison Service (TILS)
- Veterans' Mental Health Complex Treatment Service (CTS)
- Veterans' Mental Health High Intensity Service (HIS)

This will make the service user journey smoother and more consistent across England. Regionally based mental health provider collaboratives will be led by the following lead providers:

Lead Provider	Region
Cumbria, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear NHS Foundation Trust	North East and North West of England
Essex Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust	East of England
Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Trust	Midlands
Berkshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust	South East England
Camden & Islington NHS Foundation Trust	London
Avon and Wiltshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust	South West England



The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service

Specialist care for Service leavers, reservists, veterans and their families

Need help?
Take the first step by contacting Op COURAGE. You can do this yourself, or ask your GP, a charity, friend or family member to get in touch for you.



Region	Contact Information
North	E: OpCourageNORTH@cntw.nhs.uk T: 03003 733 332
East	E: mevs.mhm@nhs.uk T: 0300 034 9991
Midlands	E: mevs.mhm@nhs.uk T: 0300 323 0137
London	E: veteransservice@candl.nhs.uk T: 0203 317 6818
South East	E: gateway@berkshire.nhs.uk T: 0300 365 2000 (Option 4)
South West	E: mevs.mhm@nhs.uk T: 0300 034 9986

Op NOVA: Supporting Veterans in The Justice System

Following a robust procurement exercise, we have appointed the Forces Employment Charity to deliver Op NOVA, an England wide service for veterans who come in to contact with the justice system, pre and post prison custody.

This non-clinical service builds on existing provision to improve the identification and support of veterans pre and post prison custody. Working together with NHS services and health and justice services, as well as charities and other organisations, Op NOVA provides a single point of contact for veterans, who, following an assessment, will have a comprehensive support plan developed for them that is overseen by a care and support co-ordinator.

Op NOVA, which is being delivered by Forces Employment Charity in collaboration with Care After Combat, builds on the success of Project Nova that supported veterans pre prison in five regions of England.

Health Education England (HEE) joining NHSE

As of April 2023, Health Education England (HEE) has officially joined NHS England. HEE shares our purpose to deliver high-quality services for all, and are putting workforce, data, digital and technology at the heart of their plans to transform the NHS.

GRANTHOLDER UPDATES

NORTHERN IRELAND/SOMME NURSING HOME (VASP)



In summary, the VASP Service in Northern Ireland seeks to bridge a gap between the Statutory, Community/Voluntary sectors and individual Veterans seeking signposting support to the myriad of Veteran organisations and State Welfare Services available.

The Adviceline went 'live' on 10th June 2022, with 458 enquiries as of 9th May 2023. The formal launch of the Service took place on 21st October 2022. There continues to be outreach activities.

This E-bulletin represents the mid-way point in the term of the Project.

The adviceline service has been promoted in 7 main areas:

- NI Health & Social Care Trusts/ Nursing Homes
- Housing & Homelessness Services
- Community and Voluntary Sectors
- Legal, Policing, Probationary & Prison Services
- Political involvement
- Dept for Communities - Make the Call/ State Benefits
- Veteran Organisations and Associations

VASP Project Manager plans to further promote the Service in the following areas:

- Health & Social Care Mental Health Regional Trauma Teams
- Outreach activities to Southern and Western Health & Social Care Trust Areas
- Women's Royal Army Corp (WRAC)
- RAF Association

The VASP Service has received 458 calls as of 9th May 2023. The data has been examined and it has been noted that from the 458 calls, 649 queries were raised by the callers, leading to 853 signposting pathways being provided by the VASP Service. Typically, two signposting pathways per call.

The VASP Service reports that in the previous E-Bulletin dated 14th Feb 2023 the percentage of callers seeking signposting to ameliorate their welfare/financial difficulties was 34%. In this reporting period this has risen to 38%. This shows a sustained consecutive increase in callers experiencing welfare/financial hardship from previous E-Bulletins.

Homelessness and housing remain an area of concern within the Veteran community in Northern Ireland for varied reasons. Separately and peculiar to Northern Ireland is the added difficulty for Veterans who are losing private rental accommodation, being offered NIHE accommodation in areas they deem as posing a personal security risk. It should be noted, by turning down these offers they run the risk of making themselves Intentionally Homeless (a NIHE Housing Category).

On analysing the age profile of the callers, the VASP Project Manager has no information on the 'Unknowns' a cannot comment. Aside from the unknown age grouping the greatest number of callers fall between the 50-80yrs age range. This may reflect poorer health and financial circumstances.

I would also like to highlight the age range between 20-49 years. While the number of calls is lower the cases are usually more complex, often related to physical, mental, and emotional ill health and/or being required to leave the Service prematurely.

Of note, the Project Manager is increasingly required to visit Veterans at home to complete forms and advocate owing to the complexity of the forms, ill health, IT literacy, technology access and GDPR issues. This is particularly prevalent with older Veteran trying to access both State Benefits and Service-related Welfare support.

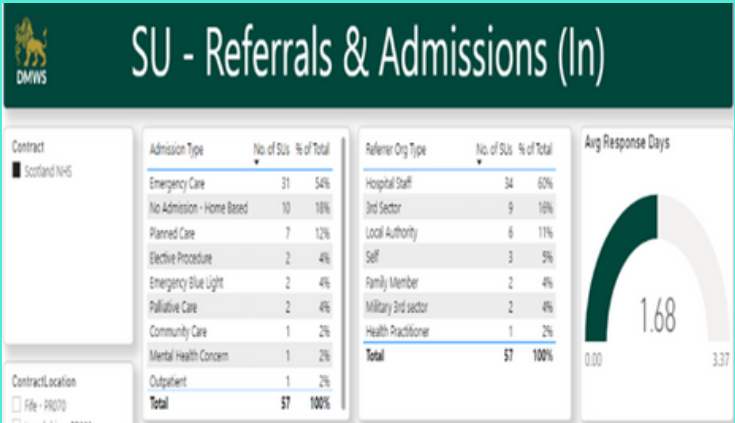
SCOTLAND –
DEFENCE MEDICAL
WELFARE SERVICES



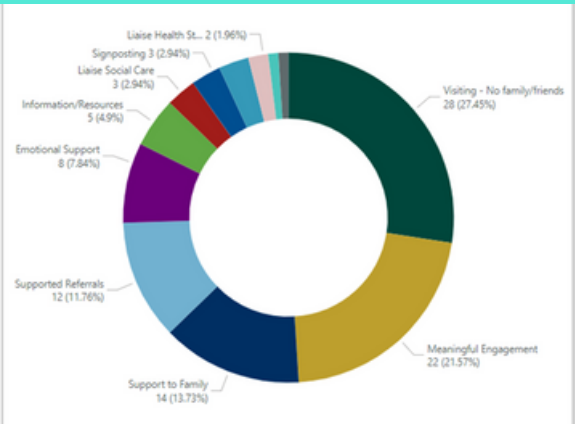
NHS Lothian

The project within Lothian continues to support those Veterans and Families identified within the Medical Pathway. We continue to look at ways to improve identification of veterans and increase education on the Armed Forces community and Armed Forces Covenant to NHS Lothian staff.

In Lothian we have supported 57 members of the Armed Forces Community and our greatest number of referrals have come from Hospital staff at 60% with other referrals coming from the 3rd Sector, Local Authority, Military, Health Practitioners and self-referral. We have a response rate of 1.68 days after receiving a referral and making initial contact with the service user. The details below also highlight's the type of admissions of our service users with Emergency Care being the most common at 54%.



Our most common area of Support to our service users is visiting them in Hospital or at Home however the full range of services we deliver can be viewed in the diagram below. Services users can receive a combination of these service concurrently.



Over that last month we have placed a great deal of effort into improving the identification of veterans on admission to Hospital. Discussions have taken place with the TRAK Care (Patient tracking) teams as to how this would look and what information would not only benefit our service delivery but also assist the NHS board with valuable patient data. We have worked collaboratively with our DMWS colleagues in Great Glasgow & Clyde and this approach has resulted in the TRAK Care teams in Lothian , Greater Glasgow & Clyde and

Fife looking at a joined approach to see if we can have a common solution that would benefit all Health Boards within Scotland. We look forward to updating you on our progress in the coming months.

We also have a new member of staff within Lothian, Brian Brown has recently joined us and will be based full time at the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh and brings a wealth of experience with him.



Brian previously volunteered and worked with Help for Heroes and The Thistle Foundation as well as some other veterans organisations. His roles included Ambassador for Help for Heroes and Ambassador for the devolved nations. He was also a facilitator and well-being practitioner at The Thistle Foundation.

Over the years Brian has completed courses which would include peer support work, suicide intervention, effective listening, personal centred approaches, military mental health first aid, various inclusion courses.

Brian is very much a lived experience veteran who has had his own recovery journey.

He was an infantryman of 13 years, was medically discharged due to injury sustained in active service.

He struggled to fit in with society after his discharge which resulted in him turning to alcohol. This had a significant impact on his health However, Brian considers his recovery a success having been sober for 10 years and continues to be passionate about supporting those in a similar situation and the wider Armed Forces Community.

Brian considers his new role with DMWS a fantastic opportunity. Given his lived experience and qualifications he feels he will be a huge asset to the organisation, Veterans and NHS Lothian..



NHS GREATER GLASGOW AND CLYDE

We are pleased to report that the project continues to build momentum and impact in terms of delivery and sustainable measures that will lead to the systematic identification of veterans and the education of NHS GGC staff.

The DMWS Welfare Support Officers have supported 75 people since the project started. The average age of our service user is 75 but we have helped a wide range of people from their 20s to 90s. The biggest cohort has come to us through planned care (31%), 20% via emergency care and the remainder are a combination of elective procedures, outpatients, palliative care and primary care. We have continued to support some primary care community-based veterans, where this has been appropriate from a resource perspective and with the intention of preventing hospital admission or providing end of life welfare support. We continue to support our veterans after discharge where this is needed to help ensure a smooth transition back into living well at home.

Outcomes and Impact

With our service user’s consent, we record information which allows us to assess the impact of our interventions. Below we can see the outcomes for 34 secondary care and 27 primary care patients. This sample snapshot provides a useful overview, but the numbers don’t tell the whole story. The impact of some interventions has been significant, both in terms of an improved outcome for the veteran but also in resource savings for the Health Board

SU - Outcomes & Impacts (Closed Cases)			
Primary Care			
	No. of SUs	% of All SUs	
Reduced time taken by GP for social care and wellbeing issues	19	53%	
Implemented early intervention support	9	25%	
Prevented unnecessary attendance at hospital/A&E	3	8%	
Other	2	6%	
Reduced unnecessary appointments with GP	2	6%	
Total No. of SUs with a Primary Care Outcome	27	75%	
Secondary Care			
	No. of SUs	% of All SUs	
Obtained support from 3rd sector reducing need for NHS services	17	39%	
Contributed to improved discharge plan	9	20%	
Reduced anxiety/stress about health care/treatment	7	16%	
Improved experience of health care	6	14%	
Improved interaction between SU and/or SU Family and Healthcare Professionals	5	11%	
Reduced likelihood of NHS Mental Health Crisis Intervention	2	5%	
Reduced the likelihood of hospital re-admission	2	5%	
Other/Comments:	1	2%	
Reduced DNA at hospital	1	2%	
Reduced frequent or future unnecessary admissions to hospital	1	2%	
Improved patient condition through WO interaction			
Total No. of SUs with a Secondary Care Outcome	34	77%	
Social Isolation			
	No. of SUs	% of All SUs	
Reduced Social Isolation	20	56%	
Enabled access to Community based Activities	3	8%	
Enabled support from Buddy/Companion Services	3	8%	
Accessed Home from Hospital/Home based practical support	2	6%	
Enabled access to Service/Community Groups (e.g. Breakfast Club; Regt Assoc. Reunion Groups)	1	3%	
Other/Comments:	1	3%	
Total No. of SUs with a Social Isolation Outcome	24	67%	
Independent Living			
	No. of SUs	% of All SUs	
Other	11	35%	
Secured Alternative Suitable Accommodation	3	10%	
Secured eligible and previously unclaimed benefits	2	6%	
Secured funding for mobility aids	2	6%	
Enabled independent Living - SU remained in/discharged to their own home	1	3%	
Secured funding for housing adaptations	1	3%	
Secured funding from specialist organisation for care home fees alternative to LA funds	1	3%	
Enabled access for mobility aids and housing adaptations			
Secured Respite Placement			
Supported SU to maintain or improve suitable accommodation			
Utilised specialist (military/police/etc) Housing Provision			
Total No. of SUs with an Independent Living Outcome	19	61%	

A Service User’s Story

Robert is a 64-year-old RAF veteran who suffered life changing injuries in December last year when he fell from the 2nd floor window of his flat. He was referred to DMWS Welfare Support Officer Sam Wilke at Glasgow’s QEUH by a member of the Trauma Unit.

At first Robert didn’t want to talk to Sam, he was traumatised and very unwell both physically and mentally. After a few weeks, when Robert was making some progress, he reached out to Sam and said he was ready to talk. During his five months stay in hospital, Sam has provided an extensive range of help to Robert who has a very limited support network. As well as providing sustained emotional support, she arranged for him to receive a visit from Glasgow’s Helping Heroes to talk about financial matters, she liaised with the occupational therapist and physio about his care and played a key role in preparation for his discharge.

The physical injuries Robert sustained resulted in loss of his lower right leg leaving him wheelchair dependent while pursuing the longer process of being fitted for a prosthetic limb. This has meant he can’t return to his 2nd floor flat. Determined to help Robert find suitably adapted alternative housing and remove this hurdle to his discharge, Sam made applications to several organisations on his behalf. As a result, the Scottish Veterans Residences offered Robert accommodation at Bellrock Close in Glasgow, a fabulous facility which provides transitional accommodation and wider support focused on the veteran’s health and wellbeing, and future housing needs. Robert was discharged from hospital on 17 May and moved into his new flat. He is now in a place where he can continue to improve and be more independent, while receiving support from people who understand his needs and the challenges ahead.

Robert said “ I am very thankful for all the support I have received; I couldn’t have managed on my own. Huge thanks to everyone who has helped me get to where I am now. The service from DMWS was over and above expectations. ”

BETSI CADWALADR UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD



Ahead of Armed Forces week 2023, BCUHB has been working collaboratively with all other Welsh Health Boards, to plan an "All-Wales" approach to celebrating our Armed Forces Community. Details of our plans for Armed Forces week include:

Monday 19th June 2023

Grand opening of the Wrexham Maelor Memorial site (AM) and the raising of the Veteran Aware flag ceremony in our Central Acute Hospital: Ysbyty Glan Clwyd (PM).

Tuesday 20th June 2023

Forces Families theme (webinars from Nikki Scott; founder of Scotty's Little Soldiers and Cara Lloyd-Roberts SSCE Cymru: Supporting Service Children in Education).

Wednesday 21st June 2023

Reserves Day: "Wear your Uniform to Work" for all Reservists

Thursday 22nd June 2023

LGBTQ+ theme (webinar from Fighting with Pride charity).

Friday 23rd June 2023

Royal Army Medical Corps (RAMC) Day – (webinar with an Injured Veteran sharing lived-experience and insight into the support received from the NHS and the Armed Forces Covenant).

Saturday 24th June 2023

Official Armed Forces Day – hosted this year in Newport South Wales.



Armed Forces in Wales Awards – 2023

BCUHB is proud to announce that, as a result of the fantastic work being undertaken across the Health Board in support of our Armed Forces Community (Staff and Patients), our Armed Forces Covenant & Veteran Healthcare Collaborative Lead Zoe Roberts, has been nominated for and shortlisted for, the Armed Forces in Wales (Covenant) Award. Zoe will attend 160th (Welsh) Brigade Headquarters on 1st June 2023, to be interviewed ahead of the Award ceremony on Armed Forces Day (24th June 2023).



BCUHB's Prison Strives for Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance – Veteran Aware Accreditation



BCUHB's Armed Forces Leads has also jopined forces with HMP Berwyn Staff to commence VCHA Veteran Aware accreditation process. Plans are under way to implement the VCHA's 8 Mainfesto standards in efforts to achieve accreditation ahead of Armed Forces week 2023.



Securing Permanent Funding for BCUHB's Armed Forces Lead

BCUHB are in the process of drafting a business case which will highlight the need for long-term funding of the Armed forces Lead role, across the Health Board (and wider North Wales). Highlighting the benefits arising from the Armed Forces in the Acute Hospital Setting project, alongside showcasing the noteworthy feedback aligned with positive patient outcomes, BCUHB Armed Forces Programme Director plans to call upon the Voluntary Veteran Organisations express the importance of this role for our Armed Forces Community within Health.

Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust (AFCFT) – Qualitative Interviews and Site Visit 2023

Professor Alan Finnegan recently visited BCUHB's Executive Headquarters in St Asaph North Wales, to undertake a series of qualitative interviews as part of the project. BCUHB's Lead, alongside SSAFA were keen to discuss the benefits and also the barriers to success, arising from the projects implementation. The Health Board are pleased to advise that approval has been granted to employ the AFA Portal, and data capture can now commence!

WRIGHTINGTON, WIGAN AND LEIGH (WWL) NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



At the start of 2023, I was very privileged to be nominated as Armed Forces Advocate of the Year 2023. I discovered I had been selected as a finalist in February and was invited down to the Victory Services Club in London for a black tie dinner. I went with my husband Rick, who is a Flight Sergeant in the RAF and was very

humbled listening to the stories of the other finalists and winners. To my surprise, I won the award for the work that I have done at Wrightington, Wigan & Leigh to improve services for our Armed Forces Community. I am very privileged to do the work that I do and couldn't have done so much without the amazing support of colleagues and local AF services. Celebrating Forces Families Awards is organised by the MOD Partner Employment Group to celebrate the Armed Forces Community and this is the 2nd annual event that has been run.



Patients First

Since the update of our IT systems in November, to make the Armed Forces question a mandatory part of admissions we have seen a 2500%+ increase in Armed Forces Community persons being identified and a 600% increase in referrals, which has resulted in some really significant pieces of support work being undertaken. One patient who was identified as needing extra support – Patient A had been admitted to hospital with an infection in the leg that needed surgical intervention. The patient had mobility issues and although social care had been out to do a care needs assessment and had made some adaptations, the family were still waiting for altered access to be put in to enable access to the house. As a result Patient A could not be released from hospital and was likely to remain for a further 28 days of treatment. On referral to our local Armed Forces Hub, we were able to arrange for the volunteer team to go and put in the altered access meaning we were able to arrange for at home treatment and get patient A home within 5 day as opposed to the original 28 days. This supported the patients mental health and aided recovery as people recover better in their own home and supporting a 'Home First' approach to care.



Training

The Armed Forces Awareness training that was introduced at the start of November has been really successful. clinical and non-clinical induction, onboarding leadership, access via WWL Learning Hub and on request of individual teams.

Since introduction over 800 staff have had the the Armed Forces Introduction training and over 300 staff have completed the full Armed Forces Awareness training and have received the AF Awareness certificate and badge to show patients they can ask for additional support from someone who has an understanding of the AF culture.



The Armed Forces Champions group continues to grow in strength and we now have just shy of 40 champions across the trust. The first champions meeting took place in March 2023. We were very privileged to have some of our local veterans come along and share their stories to really bring alive why it is so important for staff to be AF Aware and then we had some superb

training delivered by Diomidis Psomas looking at Trauma Informed Care in relation to Veterans and the AF community.



Pride in Veteran Standards

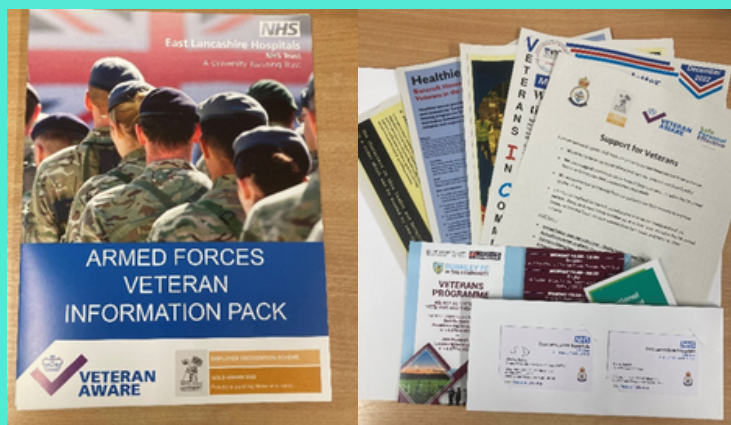
Wrightington, Wigan & Leigh NHS Foundation Trust is very proud to be the 4th NHS Trust in the UK to be accredited by Fighting with Pride with the Pride in Veteran Standards. This has proudly been communicated throughout the trust using Social Media and our internal comms team.

Exec Team Presentation

A presentation was given to the Executive Team, earlier in May which was very well received and gained much support for the Armed Forces Agenda and continuing to drive forward the Armed Forces strategy that was put in place in July last year. Particularly encouraging is the support to continue to grow the training offer and the number of Armed Forces within the trust.

EAST LANCASHIRE HOSPITALS NHS TRUST

Since our last report ELHT have had a busy few months as always. We have now visited and supported 1342 Veterans in-patients across our five hospitals since April 2022. This support has ranged from a simple chat and reassurance to referrals to Op Courage and The Veterans Trauma Network for those veterans that have found themselves in very difficult positions. We have also assisted with housing for the homeless veterans that have presented to our ED Department.



Each patient we visit receives one of the packs and both Fiona and I chat through the various support options that are available, both locally and nationally.

Electronic Patient Record

The trust goes live with the new Electronic Patient Record as of 16 June 2023. We have worked hard with Cerner to ensure a definitive Armed Forces Community referral pathway is embedded into the system. This is still an ongoing project and will hopefully be ready for the go live date.

Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) NHS

The Veterans Covenant Healthcare Alliance (VCHA) asked us to be part of data capture pilot which runs from 01 April 2023 – 30 September 2023. The aims of the pilot are as follows:

- To identify and establish a national, universal, core reporting dataset, demonstrating impact and effect for individuals, providers, and commissioning organisations to support sustainability
- To identify and establish the most effective model to deliver the requirements of the Armed Forces Covenant (AFC), reducing variation and improving access and outcomes
- To evaluate the value of the combined impact that our organisations have on the final experience of a service user.

We have also been asked to present at the VCHA Conference in London on 20 September 2023. The topic

we have been asked to present is – Demonstrating impact to the Trust (savings) and the patient.

Combat Medical Technicians (CMT's)

The trust now has CMT's on placement at our hospitals. The program has been successful so far and we have had great feedback from the CMT's that have attended so far.

The program consists of a 4-week placement and is broken down as follows:

Week 1: Induction, Orientation & Training

Week 2: ED Majors

Week 3: Urgent Care – Minor Treatments

Week 4: Ward experience on Medical Assessment Wards

Assisting other NHS Trusts

Due to the success of the ELHT Veteran Team we are constantly being asked for help and guidance from other trusts, nationwide. Although it's not a 'one size fits all' program we try and offer our expertise to those just starting their journey. We have shared information with trusts from Glasgow to Cornwall and everywhere in between. If you require any help or advice please do contact armedforcesveterans@elht.nhs.uk.

Service Awards

The ELHT Veteran team have been short listed in the category – Most Outstanding NHS at the Service Awards. The awards are being held at the Stadium of Light, Sunderland on 28 June 2023.

Looking Ahead

The ELHT Veteran Team have a busy schedule and the following are some of the projects that are currently being initiated and worked on:

- Building an internal network of Veteran Champions
- Furthering links with NHS and working on a Shared Care Records Project
- Building links and relationships with local veteran organisations.
- Working with Office for Veteran Affairs & NHS England with regards to supporting Homeless Veterans.
- We are currently writing a business plan to take this service beyond the pilot which ends April 2024.

MANCHESTER UNIVERSITY NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



The Manchester University NHS Foundation Trust (MFT) have been continuing to support the armed forces community during the challenging industrial actions and operational pressures.

Grace has been working within the Manchester Royal Infirmary's (MRI), inpatient wards and has engaged with all ward clerks and personal assistants on the wards so that all Armed Forces personnel who come into the hospital are identified through asking every patient the question, "Have you ever served, or have a relative in the UK Armed Forces?" The Trust has also ensured that each ward in the MRI has a Military display, to share resources and show our support. In some cases, Veterans have not wanted to make their status known initially, but our display boards show that we care, and we want to offer the best possible support to the community should they need our services. This project has been very successful, and there has been an increase in Veterans making their status known.

Grace provided some training to trainee doctors within the trusts, Local Care Organisation. Individuals were very engaged, and out of the group not one individual had any connection to the armed forces community, therefore they found the training interesting, insightful, and very useful when supporting the armed forces community within their areas of work.

MFT supported Step Into Health at the Career Transition Partnership event in Salford, to support service leavers and Veterans into employment within the NHS. It was a very successful day, having a number of individuals interested in a career at MFT. It was also lovely to share the stand with ally Sid Shafiq from East Lancashire Hospital

Trust – collaboration at its best with NHS Armed Forces advocates working together to support our Veterans!

Grace is currently finalising plans for the NHS 75th Anniversary, where she is incorporating Armed Forces week to show support to our NHS and Armed Forces Communities.

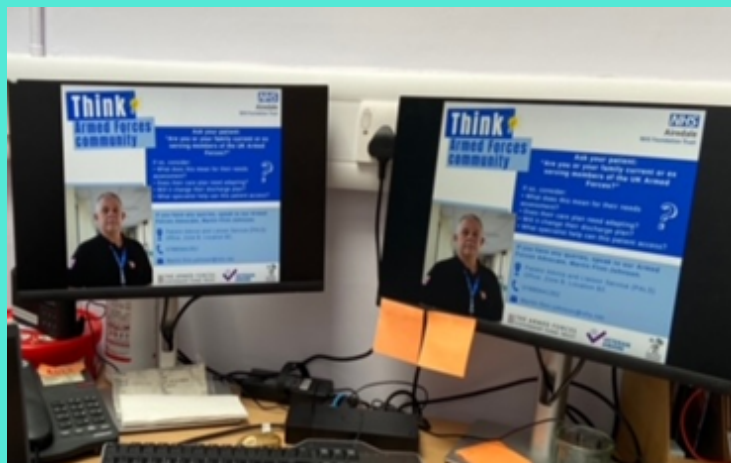
Grace has been shortlisted for an exemplary award "Outstanding achiever of the Year" at the British Ex Forces in Business Awards and will be attending the awards evening in London. This award is in recognition for the achievements during her employment as the Veterans Integrated Hospital Care Programme Manager, which would not have happened without the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust's grants.



AIREDALE NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



Airedale has had the Armed Forces Advocate in post for 9 months and Martin is now a well-known face within our hospital (in part helped by the posters and screensavers with his face on-the photo was added based on feedback from some of the patients he has supported).



This has been another really busy period at Airedale NHS Foundation Trust for our Armed Forces project and Martin has been working across a wide spectrum of workstreams.



At a strategic level Martin has been continuing to raise the profile of the Armed Force Covenant within the hospital and across the wider health system. In addition he has been continuing to develop links within our Armed Forces Covenant Partnership, meeting with Councillors and the Mayor of Bradford, highlighting the work we do. Martin has also

attended a local, newly formed Ilkley Armed Forces and Veteran's Breakfast club which gave him the opportunity to speak with local members of the Armed Forces Community as well as our local MP.

Within the hospital we continue to develop our Armed Forces Community offer. I had the opportunity to talk through the patients who Martin was supporting with him this week; this snapshot of that particular day was very powerful in terms of the breadth and depth of support Martin is offering.

We have formalised our information offer too-new Armed Forces Veteran Information Packs are now in use and being well received. In addition we have new Information Boards and Banners throughout the hospital.

Staff training continues to go from strength to strength with over 240 members of staff receiving some Armed Forces training. Our Corporate induction now features a slot with Martin and he has also become a star of the screen with a prerecorded induction training package. Our next ambition is to get training in the Armed Forces Community mandated—Martin is leading on getting this done and also developing training via e-learning.

One of the things that we have been discussing at Airedale is the development of the Armed Forces Advocate role. We have been reaching out to other providers to understand how people are approaching scope and role boundaries

there is clearly a significant need for this role and we are keen to proactivley develop it to not only meet the needs of our population but also to support our Armed Forces Advocate in his role and ensuring it is link pathways and po



The impact this project is having on our hospital and the individuals who Martin is supporting is significant. We are now looking forwards to Armed Forces week when we have a programme of events both internally at Airedale and across our wider community.

EAST SUFFOLK AND NORTH ESSEX FOUNDATION TRUST



Our Armed Forces Advocate (AFA) has been in post now for a year. During this time we have continued to proactively work with others to share best practice, show support and maintain the positive relationships we have with our armed forces community.

Since our last update, our AFA has been invited to present locally and regionally. Sharing information about their role and progress to date as part of – Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Setting programme.

Presentations

- ESNEFT – Council of Governors meeting
- Queen Elizabeth Hospital (Kings Lynn)
- Grant Holder – Regional webinar

Additionally, they have also had the opportunity to attend a number of conferences building on and forging new partnerships.

Conferences

- NHS and the Armed Forces: Our People
- Supporting Armed Forces in Acute Hospital Settings: Chester Roadshow
- MORE THAN 'JUST A HOSPITAL'
- Stronger Together: Norfolk and Suffolk NHS Foundation Trust

Veteran Identification

We have recently included a Military Veteran 'Alert' to the care flow electronic system. Building on this provision in May 23, ESNEFT's business informatics team, incorporated a system which enables our AFA to view/track any service users assigned with the 'Alert'. Although there is limited data at present, the aim is to increase the number of veterans identified, in turn providing additional support as required.

Armed Forces Awareness Training

Since the start of the project, we have achieved great success in the delivery of the armed forces awareness training. At ESNEFT we have undertaken a layered approach to the delivery of armed forces awareness training;

- Our AFA hosts an armed forces awareness stand as part of a welcome fair at inductions for all new starters within the Trust – who receive a comprehensive briefing on the aims and objectives of veteran care within the Trust
- AFA delivers bespoke training to colleagues either face to face or online sessions.
- We have an e-learning package available on ESR (content provided by the Westminster Centre for Veterans Research – University of Chester)
- We encourage staff members to complete the Sussex Armed Forces Network –Service Champion Training. Providing a study day to support those attending.

Future

We are in the process of launching an on-line drop in learning sessions on the Trust events and Training page.

Employment

We value the expertise and knowledge of the Armed Forces Community and recognise that their skills and experience can also bring huge benefits to the NHS. In March 23;

- We submitted our 'Gold' bid application – Defence Employer Recognition Scheme
- ESNEFT in partnership with Colchester institute launched an Armed Forces Community – Employment Programme. Offering masterclasses and work placements in non-clinical areas across ESNEFT. Programme duration – 12 week with a guaranteed interview on completion for all candidates.
- ESNEFT's Armed Forces Network hosted an insight day – providing first hand advice about transitioning into an NHS career. This event was delivered to serving personnel attending a transition from military service course held at the Personnel Recovery Centre in Colchester.
- AFA provided direct support to two service leavers who were signposted locally by the Career Transition Partnership seeking employment opportunities.



JAMES PAGET UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS NHS FOUNDATION TRUST



The Trust has now had an Armed Forces Advocate in post for 12 months and the role is now a well established focal point in the Trust and in the local community for support. Our AFA now takes referrals from all departments in the trust, community support teams and GP surgeries. Also a number of individuals in the community contact the AFA by phone or email to ask advice. This successful awareness has enabled our Armed Forces Advocate engage with over 250 individuals.



In March our Armed Forces Advocate hosted another successful coffee morning at the Trust. Over 30 veterans attended and really enjoyed the opportunity to speak with our Armed Forces Advocate and engage with like minded people. A member of Op Courage also attended the event and gave a presentation on the positive work they do and how people can get the support they need.



In February the Armed Forces Advocate was awarded employee of the month by the Trust Chief Executive. The trust had received a lot of positive feedback on the good work of the role both in the Trust and the local community. The Armed Forces Advocate was also awarded the chief nurse coin for putting patients at the center and caring at the core

This was due to the work with one particular patient who said he wouldn't be here today if it was not for the work of the AFA.



In April our Armed Forces Advocate successfully completed the London Marathon, raising money for their "Safe Garden" project. Over £1800 will be used to develop a safe outdoor space with dedicated remembrance area. Work has now started on the project and we hope to open the garden at the start of Armed Forces Week. The Armed Forces Advocate has now raised £4000 since starting the role. All the money has gone to support Armed Forces Community individuals both in the Trust and local community.



The Armed Forces Advocate has been working closely with East Anglian Air Ambulance and helping them become more Armed Forces Community aware. A member of EAAA attended a brief given by the Armed Forces Advocate and decided they wanted to make changes, including identifying members of the Armed Forces Community. The Armed Forces Advocate has spoken to a number of staff and helping the organisation to develop their plan to obtain Veteran aware status in the near future.

UHD has now had an AFA in post for almost 12 months now. A very good foundation has been put in place to deliver a successful service for the Armed Forces Community within UHD. The role has over the last 12 months received some very positive feedback from stake holders, patients, staff and Family members of the Armed Forces Community (AFC).

The AFA continues to make regular referrals to numerous supporting agencies, both locally and nationally as well as assisting members of the AFC with such matters as homelessness, welfare support, home de-cluttering and substance misuse. There have been a number of requests from staff who are members of the AFC around what support is available for serving personnel's spouse whilst they are on tour.

Spreading the word

The AFA has given a number of presentations over the last few months to a number of different organisations including, 'We Are With you' (Substance misuse) and to The Dorset Armed Forces network meeting which was held at Hammworthy Camp and included representatives from a number of local military units, local supporting agencies. This was a very well supported event and it is hoped that there will be more of them in the future. Along with this, the AFA is an active member of the Dorset Armed Forces Covenant programs who have a 5 year strategic plan to improve the care and support the local Armed Forces Community and was able to attend the recent Dorset Armed Forces Covenant Conference at the Bovington Tank Museum.

HR

UHD HR department have now assigned an individual to assist the AFA in promoting and trying to encourage AF service leavers to seek employment in the NHS. In March, the AFA was able to participate in a Team's Recruitment fair for the south west of England with over 80 future service leavers participating.

ERS Gold

After gathering as much evidence as possible and attending an ERS Gold workshop and a number of teams meetings with his allocated REED, the application for UHD's ERS Gold has been submitted. The wait is on now till June to find out if we have been successful or not with this year's application.

UHD Reservist Policy

The new UHD reservist Policy approval is now in its final stages, having been through a number of meetings and it should have its final ratification mid-May on the Staff Partnership Forum.

Introduction of Welfare and Information Packs

The introduction of UHD welfare packs for veterans is proceeding well. After a meeting with the local Royal British Legion Chairman, funding has been secured and the possibility of Tesco donating some items. Contact details and information leaflets from local and international organisations who assist veterans are being collected to put the information packs together.

Reservist Recruitment

243 Field Hospital continue to hold their regular recruitment days at two of UHD locations, Poole and Royal Bournemouth Hospitals. Both locations are getting plenty of encouraging enquiries and potential recruits, keeping Sgt Eastman busy.



Supporting Armed Forces in Acute hospital Settings' Chester Road show

The AFA was able to attend the AFAHS Chester Road show in April. This was a great opportunity to meet the other AFAs face to face, take away some valuable information and confirmation that what UHD are demonstrating good practice. It also equipped the AFA with some good ideas of things to consider in the future.

AFA Evaluation Interview

In April, a 12 month review and evaluation of the role was conducted by Dr B. Randles. This was a positive review and it was confirmed that the role was proving to be successful in improving patient care within the Armed Forces Community.

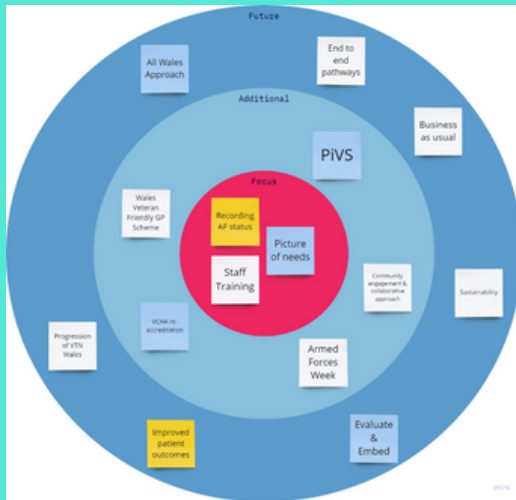
CARDIFF AND VALE UNIVERSITY HEALTH BOARD



Maisy Provan came into post as the Armed Forces Healthcare Collaborative Lead on the 3rd of April and we have now been able to commence our Armed Forces work in line with the covenant funding bid.

Since starting she has had meetings with IT to develop a mandated 'have you ever served' question along with engaging with communications and executive teams.

In Cardiff we are working to get poppy magnets for the ward whiteboards and build a network of CAV Staff with an Armed Forces connection.



To date we have had many positive responses to these implementations and plans and hope this continues moving forwards. The next main aim is training and education of staff to ensure people have a better understanding of the Armed Forces Community and their needs.

We also have a DMWS Rep in Post, Mike Davies, who is our 'boots on the ground', a peer support worker who has been engaging with ward staff and veterans within the acute hospital.



Wales have launched their own Veteran Friendly GP scheme through HEIW and we have been working with our primary care networks to support staff to aid with end to end pathways.

CAVUHB is now signed up to the Pride in Veterans Standard and is working to raise awareness of the LGBT+ Veteran community with continual links with Ruth Birch from Fighting with Pride.



Meetings have been had with Step into Health to start the ball rolling with positive Armed Forces Recruitment in the Health Board.

Shared learning between Health Boards across Wales is continuing to allow us to have an 'All Wales' approach to Veteran and Armed Forces Community health. Watch this space for a joined up All Wales Approach to Armed Forces Week in June.

UNIVERSITY STAFF PROJECT TEAM



Professor Alan Finnegan PhD RN FRN FRSA CF FAAN

Alan joined the NHS in 1978, and then joined the British Army as a Nursing Officer in 1987. During his military career he reached the rank of Colonel and had numerous appointments. Since commencing at the University of Chester in 2016, Alan has been appointed as the principal investigator for over 30 research projects. Alan holds numerous Fellowships such as the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust and Chairs numerous committees such as the Northwest Armed Forces Network.

Further Information:

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/departments/westminster-centre-research-and-innovation-veterans-wellbeing/staff/alan-finnegan>



Dr Becky Randles BSc PhD FHEA PGCert GMBPsS

Becky has a background rooted in Psychology and progressed directly onto her PhD in 2019 after completing her undergraduate degree at Liverpool John Moores University. She has completed several research roles in areas such as Domestic Homicide, Touch Perception and Research Ethics and Governance. Becky has extensive experience in both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.

Further Information:

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/departments/westminster-centre-research-veterans/staff/becky-randles>



Lottie Ainsworth-Moore

Lottie joined the Centre in January 2019. She is a military spouse of a currently serving Officer and has previously worked for military charities. Her principle role within the Centre is Project Administrator where she is working on various evaluations with the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust and the NHS. Lottie is also a Families Representative on the Cheshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership Committee.

Further Information:

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/departments/westminster-centre-research-and-innovation-veterans-wellbeing/staff/lottie-ainsworth-moore>

The Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans

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Westminster Centre for
Research in Veterans



EVENTS, NEWS AND INFORMATION

EVENTS

Improving the welfare of Armed Forces veterans in Cheshire

Members of the Cheshire Armed Forces Covenant Partnership came together to improve the welfare of the veteran community in the county.

Hosted by the University of Chester's Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans, the Symposium saw the four local borough councils of Cheshire West and Chester, Cheshire East, Halton and Warrington together with the NHS, charities, the Department of Work and Pensions, the emergency services, veterans, military families, the Ministry of Defence and the University to look at further collaborative ways of working.

The symposium facilitated the partnership sharing information of Cheshire and Warrington's current projects and personal reflections, as well as welcoming local dignitaries for a re-signing in support of the Armed Forces Covenant.

Armed Forces Community Research International Webinar Series

The Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans host free webinar sessions that take place every 2 months via Zoom. The previous webinar took place on the 18th of May 2023 with a presentations from Dr Eric Spikol and Dr Mary Keeling. The next webinar will take place in July 2023.

Details of the next session as well as recordings of previous sessions can be found here:

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/events/armed-forces-community-research-international-webinar-series>



The symposium was offered as a free event as a result of funding from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust as part of their Veterans' Places, Pathways and People Programme North-West (VPPP (NW)). This aims to develop better, more joined up, and lasting support for local veterans with mental health needs in the region. It aims to create safer places to receive support; better access and more effective pathways of care and support and exemplary people to assist with support.

Westminster Centre for
Research in Veterans



University of
Chester



Royal College
of Nursing

CURRENT RESEARCH

The Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans has several research projects currently ongoing. Further Information: <https://www1.chester.ac.uk/westminster-centre-research-veterans>

Exploring the Employment Experiences of Spouses/Partners of British Armed Forces Personnel

This research seeks to explore the challenges experienced by spouses/partners of serving personnel when gaining employment. Funded by the AFCFT the research has been designed in co-production with military spouses/partners at the Centre and starts on 01st June 2023.

A Comparative Study of Common Mental Health and Physical Disorders in the Veteran and Non-Veteran Populations

The FiMT comparison study commenced on 01st April 2023 and is a development of the pioneering work carried out in the 'Where are all the Veterans' study. The aim is to compare the clinical data from veteran and non-veteran populations across a number of physical and mental health conditions. The Centre has secured the cooperation of their target 13 GP practices.

An evaluation of the NHS Single Point of Contact for Armed Forces Families Pilot (SPOC)

An NHS England and NHS Improvement pilot programme sees the establishment of an Armed Forces families and Armed Forces community care coordination support framework system and single point of contact (SPOC) across England to help them navigate the NHS.

The Centres evaluation will explore the perspectives of families who have accessed the initiative, SPOC staff members and those involved in implementing the initiative. The study aims to identify the benefits, challenges and effectiveness of the SPOC on Armed Forces Families' social needs and healthcare mobility.

Understanding the Experiences of Minority Ethnicities in the Armed Forces

This is a feasibility study to understand the motivators behind why Black and Asian and ethnic minority communities choose to join the British Armed Forces, why they remain and ultimately their reasons for leaving. This study also seeks to understand the experiences of both veterans and their families whilst serving whilst in the military and during their transition to civilian life.

An evaluation of the AFCFT One is Too Many (OITM) Programme

The One is Too Many evaluation aims to explore social isolation, help-seeking behaviour and provide indicators of the situational factors causing distress and potentially self-harming / suicide in military veterans. The evaluation intends to provide recommendations to help improve health outcomes and reduce determinates of poor health for military veterans.

PUBLICATIONS 2023

Currie, J., Thompson, C., Grootemaat, P., Andersen, P., Finnegan, A., Carter, M., & Halcomb, E. (2023). A scoping review of clinical skill development of preregistration registered nurses in Australia and five other English-speaking countries. *Journal of Clinical Nursing*, 32, 283–297. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jocn.16239>

Finnegan, A. and Randles, R. (2023) Where are all the veterans? A mixed methods assessment of a systematic strategy to increase veteran registration in UK primary healthcare practices. *BMJ Open*. [In Press].

Finnegan, A., Salem, K., Green, N., Ainsworth-Moore, L. and Ghomi, M. (2023) An Evaluation of the NHS High Intensity Service for Military Veterans. *BMJ Military Health*. [In Press].

Finnegan, AP. (2023). Educating Nurses to Deliver Optimum Care to Military Veterans and their Families. *Science Talks*, 100144 /doi.org/10.1016/j.sctalk.2023.100144

Randles, R. and Finnegan, A. (2023) Guidelines for Writing a Systematic Review. *Nurse Education Today*. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.nedt.2023.105803>

Randles, R., Burroughs, H., Green, N. and Finnegan, A. (2023) Prevalence and Risk Factors of Suicide and Suicidal Ideation in Veterans who Served in the British Armed Forces: A Systematic Review. *BMJ Military Health*. [In Press]

Salem, K., Randles, R., Sapre, B., & Finnegan, A. (2023) The experiences of ethnic minority personnel in the armed forces: a systematic review. *Journal of Military, Veteran and Family Health* 9 (1), 5–14. doi:10.3138/jmvfh-2022-0019. open access.

RESOURCES

Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust:

<https://www.covenantfund.org.uk/>

Veterans Gateway:

<https://www.veteransgateway.org.uk/>

Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans:

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/westminster-centre-research-veterans>

USEFUL LINKS

10-step video to improve the registration of military veterans

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/westminster-centre-research-veterans/research/where-are-all-veterans-finding-forgotten-phase-2>

Free Educational module – Westminster Centre for Research in Veterans Online Training:

<https://www1.chester.ac.uk/introduction-armed-forces-community>

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